

New Civic Center To Be Completed By August 1st.

Completion of the new \$1,000,000 Torrance Civic Center is hoped for by August 1, City officials announced.

The eagerly awaited center will include the new City Hall and Police Station, as well as Recreation facilities.

Recreation officials are anticipating the completion of the Civic Center swimming pool by July 1. Dedication ceremonies to open the pool are set tentatively for the first week of July, they said.

Construction on the site suffered set-backs due first to the materials strike last year, and the floods this year.

With the completion of the center city officials and administrative personnel can at last look forward to the end of one of the worst cases of working space shortage in the state of California. Also, Police Chief, W. A. Haslam, and his staff are now within reach of a modern establishment. At present, the total space available for administration, and that covered by the jail, is less than the area of many Torrance homes.

The almost unbelievable growth of this community has put pressure on the city's seams since 1950 when an influx began that has trebled the population to its present 65,000. Also, the influx continues at the rate of 1000 people a month.

The mechanical problems raised by this administrative task have been large and they have been compounded by a building-permit valuation that in 1954 exceeded \$45,086,552.

Grading of the 27-acre site situated at Madrona avenue and Torrance blvd., was completed during the week of July 25, 1955 and on August 1, construction was begun on the city hall and police station.

These structures together with an Olympic-Games specification swimming pool and a very large athletic field will comprise the civic center for the present. Torrance now embraces 18.88 square miles and it is one of the few communities in Los Angeles county that can expand onto additional land through annexation. It is believed by state officials that Torrance will ultimately be a major city of at least 100,000 people, ranking in size with Long Beach and Pasadena. Much of this growth will be attributable to a large industrial potential yet to be developed, according to local business leaders.

The site will also provide ample area for the erection of a civic auditorium, California State building, and county and municipal court buildings, according to Mayor Albert Isen.

In laying the groundwork for the project, the Torrance city council examined the qualifications of a number of architects and decided to retain Marion J. Varner, of Pasadena, who has established a reputation for doing very outstanding civic work and within the allotted budget.

During the last week in September, 1954, Architect Varner's preliminary designs, specifications and cost estimates were approved by the Torrance city council, headed by Nicholas O. Drale, who was then mayor. Members of the city council were: Willys Blount, Victor Benstead Mervin Schwab, Nick Dole, and the present mayor, Albert Isen.

Varner's plans call for a two-story city hall embracing 20,000 square feet and a one-story police station containing 10,000 square feet. Both structures make use of the most economical combination of reinforced brick and pre-cast, reinforced

concrete panels. Forced-air heating and ventilation will be provided. Fluorescent slimline, high-frequency lighting will be used.

What now shows on the blue-prints as a civil defense area has been changed to house an employee's lounge and Park and Recreation Department work rooms. Projecting from one side of this part of the structure is a car-parking shelter roof.

The ground floor of the city hall will be done in terrazzo with some portions in concrete. Vinyl floor coverings will be used on the latter. The lobby will have a glare and heat-resistant, all-glass front in combination with stone and reinforced concrete. Leading to the second floor will be a concrete, cantilever, circular stairway.

In the principal offices and in the council chamber, the woodwork will be in combinations of caldeo, black walnut, African red cherry and ash.

Combined with styling requirements, the architect was also faced with the necessity of providing maximum durability against the usual hard usage inflicted upon civic buildings by the public. This meant that every feature of the building's interior had to be considered from the standpoint of staying abilities and of economy of maintenance.

While the basic design work was in progress, every piece of material and every item of equipment had to be weighed against budget limitations to provide maximum style and beauty along with maximum durability at minimum cost, according to City Manager George Stevens.

Civil defense quarters have been moved to the basement of the building. Covering this space, which will also serve as a disaster center, will be a blast-proof, reinforced concrete slab. These rooms will be fitted with emergency radio and telephone circuits as well as an emergency power generator which will also serve the police station.

The new police station will embody the latest developments in administrative layout and facilities as well as those pertaining to municipal detention.

The structure of the station will conform with that of the city hall in a combination of reinforced brick and reinforced, precast concrete panels. The floor will be a concrete slab with vinyl tile in all rooms except the jail section where it will be bare concrete. The roof over the non-jail section will be of wood framework with crushed rock surfacing. Over the cells will be reinforced concrete.

The jail will hold 16 male adults and eight women with a drunk tank for 15 men. In addition, there will be individual isolation cells for four juveniles. This latter feature will make the Torrance jail one of the very few in the state which conforms with the latest requirements of the State Department of Corrections and the California Youth Authority. In virtually all present jails, juveniles are detained in group cells, or are locked up with adult inmates.

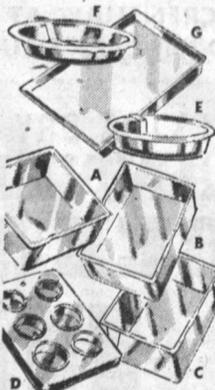
Chief of Police Haslam's men will have a 25-yard pistol range in the police station with five firing points, according to Varner. The range will be fitted with its own forced-air heating and ventilation system with walls of pre-cast, reinforced concrete and a reinforced concrete roof slab.

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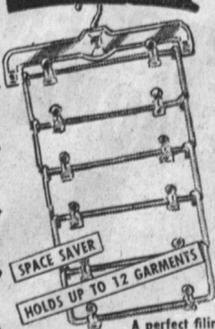
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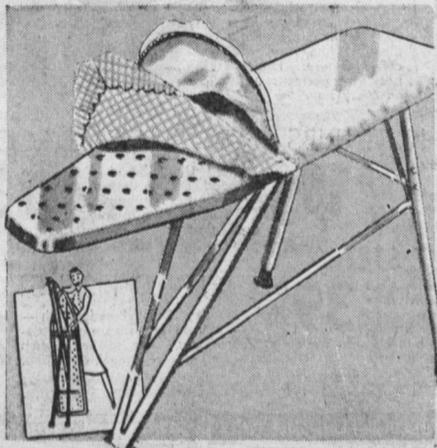
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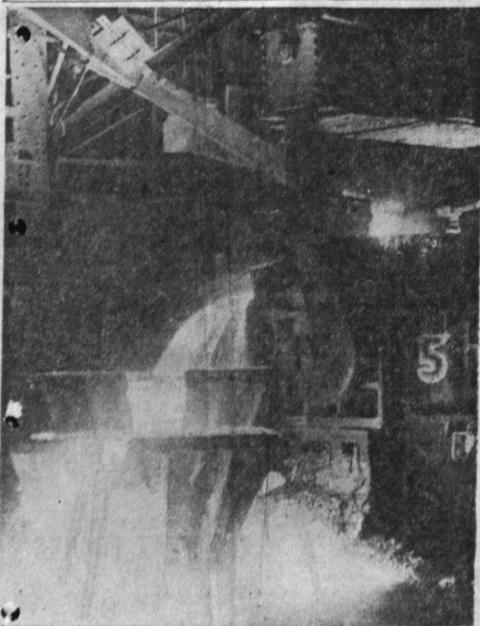
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